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PHOTOGRAPH OF GREAT BOOKS IN THE MAYAN LIBRARY

HAVE A READING PROGRAM

Mayan Revelation Number 230

The Full Man

How to Read

Professional Reading

Cultural Reading

Wisdom Reading

Religious Reading

Pleasure Reading

Beloved Centurion:

The title of your lesson at first may seem a little strange to you. You are, perhaps, wondering what your reading program has to do with your Mayan teachings - and I want to assure you that it has a great deal to do with your development as a Mayan in the Mayan Way of Life.

When you joined The Mayan Order, you did so because you were SEEKING. You were searching for a more satisfying way of life. You were eager to learn. You wanted more from life than you were getting. You were not contented with conditions as they were at that time. Your Instructor, and those connected with your studies, make an effort to cover all subjects that will make your life more perfect in all ways, and this is the reason your Mayan Order always makes such an extensive search to secure good books for your reading.

Some of our greatest leaders down through history have been men who had very little schooling. Their knowledge and their greatness came from what they were able to get from what they read. So, if you do not have an extensive education, do not feel that you cannot learn from books, because you can.

A man who gave to the world many fine libraries said the following words: "It was from my own early experience that I decided that there was no use to which money could be applied that would be so productive of good, to boys and girls who had good within them and ability and ambition to develop it, as the founding of a public library." It was Andrew Carnegie who said that, and who confirmed his convictions by building the finest libraries in the world.

Your reading habits can make you what you are. They can build character and stimulate mentality. They can enrich your mind. If there is a goal you have sought to reach but have never been able to because of lack of education and knowledge of the subject - something you have wanted to do - some career you have wanted to follow - you can secure books on the subject and learn how to do it. If you are serious in your desire, you can find what you need to help you accomplish your purpose in a book.

It is not only a matter of reading, or skimming through the pages of a book, but it is the thoughts that books provoke in you that make them valuable. Not all books are good. You should be as careful of the books you read as of the company you keep, for your habits and character can be clearly influenced by what you read.

Books, like your friends, should be not many but very well selected - and we should go back to them again and again for help, just as we often do to our friends. When a book raises your spirits and helps you and inspires you with good thoughts and the desire to be a better person, then you need look no further - you know it is a good book, and good for you.

Right now, as never before, religious books should be read more. They should be widely circulated among the thousands of people in this country. If our people do not become more religious, our nation will suffer.

The books to read are not the books that think for you, but the ones that make you think - and no book in the world equals the Bible for that. Whenever you read a good book - one that stimulates your thinking - you are developing, whether you know it or not. The things you read are making an impression on your subconscious mind that will stay there forever. You are growing in stature.

There is another important reason for reading good books - they help you in conversation - you become well informed. And the more you read, the more able you are to assimilate the truths that you find in other great books. In order to use books properly, we should go to them and use them for help when our own knowledge and power fail to give us what we need.

There is another thing that might be said for books and reading, and that is this: Very often good literature keeps us out of trouble, for when our mind is empty, it is very much like an empty house - it is left open for unwelcome visitors to enter. As these unwelcome visitors enter an empty house, so unwelcome thoughts enter an empty mind.

You will find much more on this subject in the pages to follow in this lesson, but before going further, I would like for you to make up your mind to follow its teachings as you now pray for guidance.

PRAYER

Help me, Heavenly Father, daily to enrich my understanding of truth from both printed books and the book of life, and to apply the knowledge gained in my daily life. Amen.

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THE FULL MAN It has been said that reading makes the full man, that is the man prepared for living the full life. As we gather here and there the food required for the growth and strength of the body so we gather here and there the bits of truth and wisdom which the inner nature builds into character and personality. A good program of reading means infinitely more than merely learning facts and becoming a pedant. One needs to munch regularly from the pages of well chosen books. The less one has done that heretofore, the more he needs to do it from now on.

This does not mean that we need to be bookworms. A bookworm only consumes, but we should consume that we may express in influence and give off in action the strength we have gained. The so-called bookworm seems never to get around to carrying out the good things he reads, or making use of the stature he has gained. The person who does that with physical food never grows strong, he just gets fat.

One cannot read everything, nor should he. One cannot even read more than a fraction of the important things, but he can read enough to enrich his life and

make it indispensable to the world. That makes it all the more necessary to select well what one proposes to take time reading. Be reading a little at least on a good book, every day, all the time; and try to have it be the very best book you know about for that time.

Once people read for pastime. With all our entertainment media we do not need to do that now. Our need now is not to let entertainment take all our time, but to snatch from work and pleasure enough time to read enough that is worth reading, and to assimilate it into our actual selves and lives.

That last clause is one we should pause and think about a little. Anybody knows what happens to a person who eats but cannot assimilate his food. He can actually starve to death at the dining table. One can sit in the library and become bankrupt mentally too. If one is to profit by his reading he must put his attention on each point and let it sink deeply into his mental processes, not just his superficial reactions. This may take more time, but it alone is truly reading. Think as you read, and your thinking powers will grow strong with exercise as you gather material to think about. Think about it at odd times too.

One can read much and derive little or no benefit. Concentrate on what is worth your while out of the endless material available. You will never be able to finish all of that, but you may be able to comprehend enough of the broad, general principles of truth that you can work the rest of it out for yourself.

Use the libraries. It will save you money. But own a growing number of books important enough to buy. Then exchange borrowings with friends. This will enlarge the amount of good material at both their disposal and yours. That is the way Benjamin Franklin in Philadelphia started the first public library in America.

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HOW TO READ Read rapidly if you can, but do not get the idea that rapidity is the most important thing. Read as rapidly as you can, but do not sacrifice understanding to speed. Pushing one's speed in reading is like eating too fast at the table. Digestion and assimilation take time. The important thing is to put your mind to your reading. Otherwise you are not reading at all. If you put your mind to your reading you will find you can do it better all the time as you go alone.

This may take some arrangement of your program of living. Do not crowd your reading into little corners. Arrange to give it enough time. Try to arrange to have a regular time when things are quiet and you will not have interference and interruption. Make use of scraps of time that are ordinarily wasted too, but preferably for the reading of your easier material. One's reading should be as much a part of his regular regimen as paying the bills or the family washing.

Put all your mental power into your reading. Do not pass on from a sentence or a paragraph until it is clear, no matter how long it takes. Often you will

find not only that the expression will clear in your mind, as though a mist had disappeared from around it, but also that in the process a number of new and entrancing aspects of the matter have come into view. This is real growth. You will enjoy taking time to amplify these thoughts in your thinking.

Do not try to instruct people or tell them what to read unless they ask, and reply judiciously even if they do. To do so will bring you into arguments and waste time. Build your knowledge and understanding naturally into your conversation and action. Others can catch it from there, and think it out in their own ways. If they disagree, that is their affair, and no harm is done.

It is not best to try to follow too many lines of reading at a time. Some have capacity to follow more and some less. Find your own range and hold to it, except, of course, as it enlarges. Even then the less area you try to cover at once the better you can concentrate. There is always time for a new line of reading after one has finished the one he is working on now. Remember that truth is as vast as the universe, and you couldn't explore the universe in one lifetime. Yet, as Tennyson has said, if you find the complete meaning of any one thing you will have a window open on all of it, for the universe is one and its oneness is in every thing. A single "flower in a crannied wall" holds all there is to say.

It may help you to make notes either of sentences or of pages on which they are found. Then you will need to have a plan by which these notes can be found when wanted. This you can plan for yourself, but you will soon and often realize the need for some workable plan of referring to material that would otherwise be lost.

Watch your progress. You will find that you are building a new self day by day. If there were any way of weighing spirit you would find your growth registered every time you step on the scales. This form of gaining weight is to the good.

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PROFESSIONAL One should do some steady reading on his work, whatever it may be.
READING Your work, whether in the office, on the farm, in a factory, in a laboratory, or in the home, is your profession. Since it is worth doing, it is worth developing increasing skill in doing. Whatever is a necessary part of our human existence deserves the touch of a master hand. Whatever your work is, there is helpful material about available, and your interest in your work will make this material of interest to you. Thus you will grow in skill and make advancement.

Doing some such reading will prove, even to yourself, that you have respect for your work, that you take it seriously, and that it is a field for your credible ambitions. This will increase and mean more to you as you advance and improve. If you are working for others, it will lead to promotions. If you are working for yourself, it will promote you just the same, and you will not have

to depend on anyone else for carrying it out.

Do you get dissatisfied and discouraged with your work? That is nothing either strange or singular. Most people do, and for most people it is not because of anything essentially wrong with the work, but because they cease to like it well enough and take enough interest in it. The adventure has gone out of it because they are not going forward, and they are not going forward because they are not keeping up with the times and the developments in what they are doing. These are days in which we all simply must keep growing, no matter what our age or how long we have been working at our present jobs. You will be more enthusiastic with your work if you keep learning more about it, especially the new things about it. The drudge may thus become the foremost professional.

We do not need to lament about the lack of dignity in our labor. We can put more dignity into it by elevating it, and we can elevate it and our relation to it by becoming authorities in it. Every useful and worthwhile task on earth holds the making of a fine art. See that art, and develop it. You will be developing yourself along with it, for every improvement we make in what we do makes an improvement in ourselves.

Does your work seem humdrum, and have you come to think of it as drudgery? Do you remember the thrill with which you began doing it at first, and you felt like you were coming up in the world? Keep coming up in the world by doing it better, and do it better by learning more about it. You will be surprised when you read the experiences of people who have attained skill in the very thing you are doing and wondering what has become of the glamour in it.

Notice how many of the menial tasks of the past have become so necessary that they are subjects taught in the schools. Why not get some of the textbooks and see what all this new attitude toward them is about? If the youngsters can learn the new wrinkles, you, with your years of experience, certainly can.

Don't try to learn it all at once. You didn't in the first place, and you can't now. Take it only as fast as you can try it out in practice. Then work at any new way you learn of doing things till you can do it exactly right. Before you know it people will be calling you a master.

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CULTURAL READING Do some reading just for cultural development. We can grow in viewpoint, wisdom, and understanding, just as we can grow in techniques of one kind or another. Everyone should do some reading that takes him deeper into his own life and more widely outside of it. It enlarges his world because it enlarges his interests, his affairs, his conceptions of his time and place, and his cooperation with others.

World brotherhood has always been a dream, but today it is a necessity. We cannot continue to keep going by the law of every man for himself. Some cultural reading is specifically on this subject, and the rest of it carries implications

that are. Everything we are and do these days is a part of the united life of the human race. Everything you add to your own general knowledge and ability becomes a contribution to the world life, which is the material of which the Kingdom of God is being and must be made. Your cultural reading helps to place and hold you in the deeper and truer brotherhood of thought and interest.

Let a fair part of this cultural reading be informative. We need to know things, and the world needs the people who do know things. The important people in the world life are those who know, and there is nothing that needs to keep anyone from being one of them. Of course we need to consider and seek the meanings and relationships among things known, and between them and affairs and problems; but how can we do that until after we know them?

If there are fields of thought and knowledge in which you are more of a stranger than others, they may deserve some attention, for important things may depend on them or be related to them. If something important was difficult for you in school, it may not be so difficult now, for your abilities may have grown. Why not have another look, and see if you do not find it easier and like it better now? If your education was a little lopsided earlier, you may find it a pleasure to round it out better now. This may help you to understand some other people better too.

Let some of your cultural reading be definitely refining in nature. Are you a little short on art, music, and general literature, for instance? If so, the fact may close some gates to you and keep you from enjoying some of your human contacts as well as you might. Besides it tends to impoverish your own life and cancel out a great deal of possible enjoyment for you. Are there angles and rough edges to your nature? Perhaps some attention to such things would help to smooth them down. You might even enjoy acquaintance with yourself more.

In the cultural field there are many new developments and more are constantly occurring. Some of them will last and some will not. Some have importance and some do not. It is better to start with the ideals and standards that are time-proved, and go on to others as you see fit and when you have dependable standards by which to gauge their worth.

An important part of any building is the decoration. The same is true of our lives. That is why there is needful place for culture.

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WISDOM READING There can be those who, having eyes, do not see. The physical trimmings of the way of life can be seen with eyes, but the way of life itself cannot. We all need to do some reading, the printed words of which can be seen with the eye of flesh but the deeper meanings of which can be seen only by the inner eye, the deeper eye, the eye of the soul. Its meanings are not evident at a glance, for they are among the things which "not being seen, are eternal." They give the mind deeper roots to hold it safe and sure while it grows. They also connect it with the soul.

The wisdom literature of the ages naturally and necessarily has a large didactic element in it. That is, it is teaching literature, reading from which it is intended that one shall learn what is important in his living. Many people dislike and shun the didactic. They do not want to be taught, even told, anything. They think they know all they want to know, or that being taught things is boresome, or that didactic reading, like that of the great philosophers of the past and present, tends to limit their freedom of action, and they want to do exactly and wholly as they please. Their attitude itself is reason enough that they need wisdom reading, with lectures and discussion on important topics of human living. Don't be afraid of the word "didactic". It is a good word.

Much of our best wisdom literature is old. The ancient Greek, Roman, Hebrew, Chinese, and other philosophers should be known to us. The Spanish and Japanese too are rich in wise proverbs, such as:

"The good is the enemy of the best",

"When we meet we begin to part",

"After a victory bind your helmband (hatband) tighter".

Any one of these, and hundreds of other brief epigrams are within themselves worthy of long meditation. They hold great possible enrichment for living.

But wisdom did not cease with the ancients nor even with the more recent past. Many modern minds too think so much above the level of things and gain that they have much to see to our more essential selves. For instance, George Santayana has said, "The young man who has not wept is a savage, and the old man who will not laugh is a fool". Lewis E. Lawes has said, "Never give a man up till he has failed at something he likes". James Bryant Conant has said, "Behold the turtle. He makes progress only when he sticks his neck out". These will do for samples of a very stimulating kind of reading.

One thing about wisdom reading is that it helps give one poise, balance, confidence. The sages of the world have been and are its best poised people. The reason is that they have succeeded best in conquering fear and ridding their lives of confusion, so they could live their lives with simple sincerity, knowing that nothing could really hurt them. All that can hurt us about anything is our reaction to it, and they have mastered that. Are not such people worth reading and listening to?

One of the special values of wisdom reading is that it is naturally meditative reading. Therefore it attains its full value only as it is actively and persistently applied. Few people meditate enough. They talk with other people where their minds are pulled out of line more or less by the effort to agree or the fear of what someone will think. But in meditation we can really be honest.

RELIGIOUS READING The highest type of wisdom and meditative reading is religious reading. No life is well-rounded without a healthy and effective religious interest. No mind is really well-furnished without some knowledge of the great religious writings, especially the Bible, though all the great religions have noble and worthwhile writings too. Such reading reaches the very roots of our natures, plumbs the depths of our minds, enlists the aid of our emotions, and prepares us as nothing else does for the daily walk of life and the meeting of its critical moments. It fortifies life for here, but it also confirms our natural sense of the hereafter.

This holds true even if one is not religiously inclined. He may be so just because he has left the kingpin out of his life. For the sake of culture, and intelligent conversation, and understanding of some of the great currents that sweep history, one owes it to himself to be familiar with the Bible, which means to have read it as intelligently and in the same way as he studied his literature textbooks in school. This phase of essential education cannot be given in public schools, and so one must make his own provision for it, but his right to consider himself an educated person will suffer if he does not. It is especially important to anyone who, like yourself, is wise enough to be engaged in the study of living.

It is all the better if one also does some reading in well selected parts of some of the sacred books of other religions. If he is properly grounded in his faith this will not make him either a pagan or a heretic, but only one who has done some reading in what is required in the training of every religious leader, what is called Comparative Religion.

It is well to know what some of these writings are, and also to have the benefit of some of the really sublime passages in them. The reason the distrust and enmity between the religions of the world are dying out, as evidenced for instance in the changed attitude of Mohammedan people with our memory, is due to the fact that much of this is being done. It sweeps away the fogs of misunderstanding as nothing else could.

To the casual reader the Bible is a wisdom book. That is not all it could be, but it is something. It is a beginning. Of course it is a wisdom book, but to the religious reader it is more - it is a collection of inspired writings capable of developing the inner life of the human till it fuses with the mind and purpose of the Divine, and thus motivates the outward life to be its best.

Of course the Bible and other sacred religious books are not all the religious reading available and desirable. In the field of religion, especially, of the making of many books there is no end. Books that will aid in understanding the Bible are countless with new ones being added all the time. The same is true of those we call devotional books, books designed to aid in spiritual growth and soul culture.

Thus the person who begins as a casual reader of sacred literature will become a purposeful one, growing in both mind and spirit, and therefore in living.

PLEASURE READING Life has its serious interests and sometimes its difficult hours. It should also have its proportionate share of whatever is conducive to happy hours, hours of relief from tension, hours of pleasant variety, remembering always that pleasure is a facet of happiness, not the sum of it. There is health in a hearty and honest laugh, and whatever has health in it is good, since the words "health" and "holiness" or "wholeness" come from the same derivation. Jesus is called The Man of Sorrows, but on occasion and in wholesome ways He was sometimes also The Man of Joy.

This pleasure interest is, then, a perfectly natural and proper phase of one's reading. There is plenty of available reading material for good, clean fun and for healing laughter. Living lives that are too harsh and cheerless gets many people off the right road and onto the wrong one. They feel that a human being has to have a few sunny moments now and then, and they are right about it. The Creator took notice of that need when He made flowers, and song, and face-relaxing smiles.

Joy is a wholesome interest when rightly indulged in. It can be used in refreshing one's spirit and in easing the weight on the hearts of others. The mind needs to be aired and sunned like the housewife airs and suns a stuffy room. One hearty laugh has turned many a discouraged person with a discordant mind from giving up and perhaps working ruin with his life. Sometime when you have badly needed a more normal attitude toward life have you not found it in a few paragraphs of real cleverness and wit? And have those passages not often included a high order of wisdom in the wrapping of a smile?

The great humorists, and all the really great ones are clean and decent, - are among the real servants of mankind. Most of us are indebted to them in particular, and all of us in general. The person who teaches a hardened face to smile again, and a mind that has come to confine its attention to the clouds again to recognize the sunshine, helps to make the world better. The earth is our home, and a good home is a happy one. It is said that the family that prays together stays together, and that is grandly true. The same may be said for a family that laughs together. The casting of a play requires four people - one to love, one to hate, one to laugh at, and one to fill in. That is, a hero, a villain, a clown, and someone just to be there. A good clown is also a kind of hero, for he too helps the story to come to a happy ending.

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You can thus prepare yourself for service to others too. Do some reading for pleasure, and some for fun. That will give you something to pass on when you meet someone who needs a ray of sunshine more than anything else. If that ray has a touch of wisdom in it, so much the better; but let it be sunshine.

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It is a good thing to have at least a few good books of real humor in your library, books you can loan and recommend to others who think they are ill when they are only bored. This is nothing against your intellect or seriousness of purpose. Some of the most earnest people who ever lived had a good sense of humor. It sometimes helped them to accomplish serious purposes too.

As we said at the beginning, reading makes a complete man. A little funny reading makes a cheerful one too, and that is a part of real completeness.

AFFIRMATION

I try to inform my mind as I feed my body, and as I do so my horizon widens and my world grows larger.

Blessings,

YOUR INSTRUCTOR.